WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   An amide compound represented by the following formula 1:

$$
\begin{array}{c}
R^5 \\
| \\
R^2\!\!-\!\!N \\
| \\
C\!\!=\!\!O \\
| \\
(CH_2)_m
\end{array}
\qquad (1)
$$

$$
\underset{O}{R^4\!\!-\!\!N\overset{R^1}{\underset{|}{\,}}\!\!-\!\!\overset{|}{C}\!\!-\!\!(CH_2)_n\!\!-\!\!CH\!\!-\!\!(CH_2)_p\!\!-\!\!\overset{R^3}{\underset{|}{C}}\!\!-\!\!N\!\!-\!\!R^6}
$$
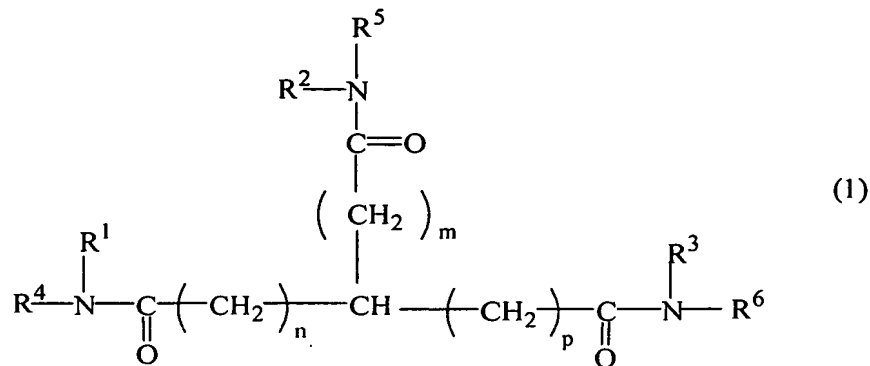
wherein R^1, R^2 and R^3 are each independently a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having a carbon number of from 1 to 3 with the proviso that at least one of R^1, R^2 and R^3 is a hydrogen atom; R^4, R^5 and R^6 are each independently a saturated or unsaturated, linear or branched hydrocarbon group having a total carbon number of from 6 to 24 which optionally has at least one group selected from the group consisting of an ether group, amide group, ester group, amino group and hydroxyl group; and m, n and p are each independently an integer of from 0 to 3.

2.   The amide compound according to claim 1, wherein m, n and p of formula 1 are all different from one another.

3.   The amide compound according to claim 1, wherein in formula 1 m is 2, n is 0 and p is 3.

4.   The amide compound according to claim 1, wherein in formula 1 m is 1, n is 0, and p is 2.

5.   A gelling agent comprising the amide compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4.

6.   A gel composition comprising an oily base and the gelling agent as defined in claim 5.

7.   An external composition comprising the amide compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4.

8.	A cosmetic preparation comprising the amide compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4.

9.	A fragrance composition comprising a fragrance and the amide compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4.

5	10.	Use of the amide compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4 for producing a gelling agent.

11.	Use of the amide compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 4 for producing a cosmetic preparation.